Justification Logic

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Knowledge as Justified True Belief

Can be traced to Plato, was widely accepted until 1963 when a paper by **Edmund Gettier** (Analysis 23 (1963):121-123) provoked widespread attempts to revise or replace it.

Related Developments

- **Brouwer**: mathematical truth = provability.
- Kolmogorov: problem solutions (proofs) have an abstract structure, hence 'logic of solutions' and intuitionistic logic.
- BHK-semantics: informal 'proof tables' for intuitionistic logic.
- Gödel: the first (incomplete) sketch of the Logic of Proofs, completed in 1995 (S.A.)

Gettier Example: Case I

Smith has applied for a job, but has a justified belief that 'Jones will get the job.' He also has a justified belief that 'Jones has 10 coins in his pocket.' Smith therefore (justifiably) concludes ... that 'the man who will get the job has 10 coins in his pocket.'

In fact, Jones does not get the job. Instead, Smith does. However, as it happens, Smith also has 10 coins in his pocket. So his belief that 'the man who will get the job has 10 coins in his pocket' was justified and true. But it does not appear to be knowledge.

In This Talk

We introduce a formal theory of justification, a.k.a. **Justification Logic**, based on classical epistemic logic augmented by justification assertions *t:F t* is a justification for *F*.

This theory grew from the Logic of Proofs **LP** (1995) in which main structural theorems were found. It became an epistemic subject after its long-anticipated Kripke-style semantics was suggested by Fitting on 2003.

We apply Justification Logic for formalizing Gettier examples.

Significance for Epistemology

Formal logical methods do not determine philosophical positions, but rather provide a tool for analyzing assumptions and making correct conclusions. We hope that Justification Logic does just that.

Justification Logic provides **a framework** capable of formalizing a significant portion of epistemic reasoning; epistemologists may find it useful, e.g., in the way they now use formal logic in their studies.

Comparisons with previous work

Relations with previous work in CS/AI, e.g., the Logic of Knowledge (Hintikka, Halpern, et al.):

Justification Logic extends the Logic of Knowledge:

1. It adds a long-anticipated formal notion of justification which makes logic more expressible;

2. It provides new evidence-based semantics for knowledge and belief;

3. It supports the basic Hintikka-style systems but on a new evidence-based foundations. This helps to bridge the gap between epistemology and the modal logic of knowledge/belief.

Initial design decisions

- 1. Propositional and quantifier-free systems first.
- 2. Classical Boolean logic on the background first.
- 3. Theory of partial (not only factive) justification.
- 4. One agent first.
- 5. Variety of systems, not one silver bullet.
- 6. Justification Logic is an open framework with all meaningful extensions welcome.

Notational convention (single agent)

KF stands for agent knows that F ,
BF stands for agent believes that F ,
Justification assertions have a format t:F that reads t is accepted by agent as a justification of F.

There is also a 'potential' reading of epistemic assertions in which **K***F* stands for **agent can know F** and **t:F** reads **t is a justification of F**.

Epistemic logics (single knower)

 $\mathbf{K} = classical \ logic + \mathbf{K}(F \rightarrow G) \rightarrow (\mathbf{K}F \rightarrow \mathbf{K}G) +$ + Necessitation Rule: $\vdash F \Rightarrow \vdash \mathbf{K}F$

 $\mathbf{T} = \mathbf{K} + \mathbf{K} \mathbf{F} \rightarrow \mathbf{F}$

- $\mathbf{K4} = \mathbf{K} + \mathbf{KF} \rightarrow \mathbf{KKF}$
- $S4 = K4 + KF \rightarrow F$
- $K45 = K4 + \neg KF \rightarrow K(\neg KF)$
 - $S5 = S4 + \neg KF \rightarrow K(\neg KF)$

Justification Logic

Justification Logic is a family of logic systems which describe justification (*t:F*), belief (BF) and knowledge (KF)

Preliminary Assumptions

Justifications are abstract objects which have structure.
We introduce a set of basic operations on justifications and establish their connection to epistemic modal logic.

The usual potential executability assumptions: atomic justifications are feasible in time and space for an agent to inspect and accept; basic operations on justifications are feasible; agent does not lose or forget justifications; agent applies the laws of classical logic and accepts their conclusions; etc.

We consider both: partial justifications and factive justifications.

Learning from the Logic of Proofs

The Logic of Proofs LP (Gödel, 1938; S.A., 1995) contains the principles:

 $t: F \rightarrow F$,

 $[y:(P \rightarrow Q) \land x:P] \rightarrow (y \cdot x):Q,$

 $t: F \rightarrow (t+s): F$

and

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if ⊢F, then s:F for some s,
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along with Positive Introspection (cf. below).

A quest for new principles

Goldman's reliabilism:

a subject's belief is justified (t:F) only if (\rightarrow) the truth of a belief (F) has caused the subject to have that belief (in the appropriate way),

Formal representation: $t: F \rightarrow F$,

and for a justified true belief to count as knowledge, the subject must also be able to 'correctly reconstruct' (mentally) that causal chain.

Formal representation: there should also be a special justification c for $t:F \rightarrow F$, i.e., $c:(t:F \rightarrow F)$.

A quest for new principles

Lehrer-Paxson's undefeasibility condition:

knowledge is undefeated justified true belief - which is to say that a justified true belief counts as knowledge if and only if it is also the case that there is **no further truth** which, had the subject known it, would have defeated her present justification for the belief.

Formal representation: if *t:F*, then for any other piece of evidence *s*, a joint evidence *t*+*s* is still an evidence for *F* :

 $t:F \rightarrow (t+s):F$.

A quest for new principles

Dretske's conclusive reasons, Nozick's truth-tracking

A reason must exist for a belief that would not be true if the belief itself were false.

Formal representation: $\neg F \rightarrow \neg t:F$, which is logically equivalent to $t:F \rightarrow F$.

If, for example, I believe that there is a chair in front of me, the reason for believing that it is there would not exist if the belief were false (that is, if the chair were not there).

Formal representation: $t:F \rightarrow (\neg F \rightarrow \neg t:F)$, which is logically equivalent to $t:F \rightarrow F$.

Basic Principle: Applicability

Application operation takes justifications s and t and produces a justification s.t such that

if $s:(F \rightarrow G)$ and t:F, then $(s \cdot t):G$.

Symbolically

$s:(F \rightarrow G) \land t:F \rightarrow (s \cdot t):G.$

This is a basic property of justifications, assumed in the Logic of Proofs LP, combinatory logic, λ -calculi, BHK-semantics, realizability, etc.

Basic Principle: Applicability

The corresponding modal epistemic principle

$$\mathsf{K}(F \to G) \land \mathsf{K}F \to \mathsf{K}G ,$$

is widely accepted in formal epistemology.

However, this principle smuggles the *logical omniscience* defect into modal epistemic logic because the latter does not have the capacity to measure how hard it is to attain knowledge.

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Justification Logic naturally escapes logical omniscience by keeping track of the size of evidence terms.

Additional Principles: Evidence Consistency

(cf. Lehrer-Paxson Principle)

If **s:F**, then whatever evidence **t** occurs, the combined evidence **s+t** remains a justification for **F**.

Operation '+' (*sum, union, choice*) takes justifications *s* and *t* and produces *s+t*, which is a justification for everything justified by *s* or *t*

 $s:F \rightarrow (s+t):F$ and $s:F \rightarrow (t+s):F$ equivalently $s:F \lor t:F \rightarrow (t+s):F$

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This is not meant to be an update, but rather a consistency of evidence condition. In the Logic of Proofs, + denotes a concatenation of proofs.

Additional Principles: Logical Awareness

An agent accepts (some) logical axioms as justified.

The natural way of formalizing this principle is postulating that for an axiom **A** there is an evidence constant **c** such that **c**:**A**.

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A flexible tool with the possibility to accept all logical axioms as justified, to accept none, and everything in between.

First appeared in the Logic of Proofs LP. Yields the Necessitation Rule in modal epistemic logic:

 $\vdash F \Rightarrow \vdash KF.$

Additional Principles: Adequacy

A justification *t:F* is factive, i.e., sufficient for an agent to conclude that *F* is true.

Adequacy yields the **Reflexivity Axiom** $t: F \rightarrow F$ similar to the epistemic axiom $KF \rightarrow F$, which is widely accepted as a basic property of knowledge (Plato, Wittgenstein, Hintikka, Nozick, etc.).

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Reflexivity of justification assertions also first appeared in the Logic of Proofs LP as a principal feature of mathematical proofs.

Additional Principles: Adequacy

Note that according to the Logical Awareness principle the agent should also have a justification of the reflexivity axiom

$$c:(t:F\to F),$$

a justification of this new axiom

yet another justification,

a:b:c:(t:F → F),

etc.

Additional Principles: Introspection

One of the fundamental principles of knowledge is identifying

and

knowing

knowing that one knows.

In the formal modal setting, this corresponds to

$KF \rightarrow KKF$.

This principle has an adequate explicit counterpart *justified*

yields

verifiably justified,

hence justifications are assumed to be verifiable.

Additional Principles: Introspection

The mere fact that the agent accepts *t* as a sufficient evidence of *F* serves as a sufficient evidence that *t:F*. Often, such 'meta-evidence' has a physical form, e.g.,

a referee report certifying that *t:F*,

- a computer verification output on *t:F*,
- a formal proof that t is a proof of F, etc.

Positive Introspection assumes that given *t*, an agent produces a justification !*t* of *t:F*

 $t: F \rightarrow !t:(t:F)$

Negative Introspection $\neg t:F \rightarrow ?t:(\neg t:F)$.

Summary of Justification Principles

Basic

Applicability

Additional

- Evidence Consistency
- Logical Awareness
- Adequacy
- Positive Introspection
- Negative Introspection

We should not expect a one-size-fits-all universal logic here; a variety of customized systems should do the job.

Evidence terms (polynomials)

Built from variables *x*, *y*, *z*, . . . and constants *a*, *b*, *c*, . . . by means of operations.

application '•'

♀ sum'+'

Constants denote atomic justifications which the system no longer analyzes (axioms, assumptions).

Variables denote unspecified justifications.

Evidence terms (polynomials)

More elaborate models could also use additional operations on justifications, e.g.,

- verifier '!'
- » negative verifier '?'

Logic of (Partial) Justifications J

- Classical propositional logic,
- Application $s:(F \rightarrow G) \rightarrow (t:F \rightarrow (s \cdot t):G)$,
- Sum $s:F \rightarrow (s+t):F$, $s:F \rightarrow (t+s):F$,

Axiom Internalization for each axiom A and a constant *c*, *c*:*A* is again an axiom.

Logic of Factive Justifications AJ

$AJ = J + Reflexivity t: F \rightarrow F$

Adding Positive Introspection

J4 = J + + Positive Introspection *t:F*→!*t:(t:F)*

AJ4 = AJ + + Positive Introspection *t:F*→!*t:(t:F)*

Adding Negative Introspection

J45 = J4 +

+ Negative Introspection $\neg t:F \rightarrow ?t:(\neg t:F)$

AJ45 = AJ4 ++ Negative Introspection $\neg t:F \rightarrow ?t:(\neg t:F)$

Checklist of basic justification systems

Justified belief systems J AJ J4 AJ4 (=LP) J45 AJ45

Forgetful projection

A meaningful way of getting from a justification assertion to one of knowledge:

s:F⇒KF.(s justifies believing in F)(F is known)

Examples (P,Q are atomic propositions):

 $t:P \to P \qquad \Rightarrow \qquad \mathsf{K}P \to P,$ $t:P \to !t:(t:P) \qquad \Rightarrow \qquad \mathsf{K}P \to \mathsf{K}\mathsf{K}P,$

 $s:(P \rightarrow Q) \rightarrow (t:P \rightarrow (t \cdot s):Q) \quad \Box \quad K(P \rightarrow Q) \rightarrow (KP \rightarrow KQ).$

Forgetful projection

Forgetful projection sometimes forgets too much:

a triviality $x:P \rightarrow x:P$ \Rightarrow $KP \rightarrow KP$,a meaningful principle $x:P \rightarrow (x+y):P$ \Rightarrow $KP \rightarrow KP$,a non-valid formula $x:P \rightarrow y:P$ \Rightarrow $KP \rightarrow KP$.

However, it always maps valid formulas of Justification Logic (JL) to valid formulas of Epistemic Logic (EL).

The converse also holds:

any valid formula of EL is a forgetful projection of some valid formula of JL.

This follows from the Correspondence Theorem (below).

Consolidated Correspondence Theorem

Let \Rightarrow be a forgetful projection, then ⊂> **K**, **J4** ▷ **K4**, **J45** ▷ **K45**, and AJ $rac{1}{2}$ T, AJ4 ▷ S4, AJ45 ▷ S5.

The first three cases concern logics of belief, and the last three - the logics of knowledge.

From Knowledge to Justifications?

The core of the Correspondence Theorem is the Realization Theorem. There is an algorithm that recovers justification terms for all modal knowledge operators in valid principles of epistemic modal logics:

- S4 S.A., 1995 (via cut elimination);
- **S5** S.A., Kazakov, Shapiro, 1999;
- K, T, K4 Brezhnev, 2000;
- **S4** Fitting, 2004 (semantical proof);
- S4 Kuznets, Brezhnev, 2005 (polynomial algorithm);
- S5, K45 Rubtsova, 2006 (with '?', by Fitting's method);S4 Fitting, 2006 (another algorithm).

Properties of Justification Systems

Usual logical properties:

- Deduction Theorem,
- *closure under substitutions.*

Properties unique to Justification Logic:

Se Internalization

if ⊢*F, <i>then* ⊢*p:F <i>for some evidence term p (every established fact is justified*).

Realization Theorem.

Example of derivations in K and J

Derivation in K

 $A \rightarrow A \lor B$

 $K(A \rightarrow A \lor B)$

 $KA \rightarrow K(A \lor B)$

 $B \rightarrow A \lor B$

 $K(B \rightarrow A \lor B)$

 $\mathsf{K}B\to\mathsf{K}(A\lor B)$

 $(KA \lor KB) \rightarrow K(A \lor B)$

Derivation in J

 $A \rightarrow A \lor B$

 $a:(A \rightarrow A \lor B)$

 $x:A \rightarrow (a \cdot x):(A \lor B)$

 $B \rightarrow A \lor B$

 $b:(B \rightarrow A \lor B)$

 $y:B \rightarrow (b \cdot y):(A \lor B)$

???

Example of derivations in K and J

- **Derivation in K**
- $A \rightarrow A \lor B$
- $K(A \rightarrow A \lor B)$
- $KA \rightarrow K(A \lor B)$
- $B \rightarrow A \lor B$
- $K(B \rightarrow A \lor B)$
- $\mathsf{K}B\to\mathsf{K}(A\lor B)$
- $(KA \lor KB) \rightarrow K(A \lor B)$

- **Derivation in J**
- $A \rightarrow A \lor B$
- $a:(A \rightarrow A \lor B)$
- $x:A \rightarrow (a \cdot x):(A \lor B) \rightarrow (a \cdot x + b \cdot y):(A \lor B)$
- $B \rightarrow A \lor B$
- $b:(B \rightarrow A \lor B)$
- $y:B \rightarrow (b \cdot y):(A \lor B) \rightarrow (a \cdot x + b \cdot y):(A \lor B)$
- $(x:A \lor y:B) \rightarrow (a \cdot x + b \cdot y):(A \lor B)$

Epistemic Semantics

Fitting model = Kripke model + evidence function $\mathcal{E}(t,F)$, which specifies whether a justification t is acceptable for a formula F at a world w; format $w \in \mathcal{E}(t,F)$.

w t:F iff F holds at all worlds accessible from w
 (traditional Kripke requirement);

 $\stackrel{\circ}{\to}$ t is acceptable evidence for F in w, i.e., $w \in \mathcal{E}(t,F)$.

Halpern-Fagin awareness function + justifications

Epistemic Semantics

In Fitting models (as in Kripke) the accessibility relation

- for **J** is arbitrary,
- for AJ is reflexive,
- for J4 is transitive,
- for AJ4 is reflexive and transitive,
- for AJ45 is reflexive, transitive, and symmetric.

Fitting Completeness Theorem (+ Rubtsova, Pacuit, S.A.): Each of these logics is sound and complete with respect to the corresponding class of Fitting models.

Syntax and its intended interpretation:

- JJ = Jones gets the job,
- **SJ** = Smith gets the job,
- JC = Jones has 10 coins in his pocket,
- SC = Smith has 10 coins in his pocket,
- **x** = whatever evidence Smith had about **JJ**,
- y = whatever evidence Smith had about JC.

The system of choice for formalization is **J**: it has all the logical tools at which Gettier hints.

Explicitly made non-logical assumptions:

- 1. x:JJ (x is a justification of 'Jones gets the job')
- 2. y:JC (y is a justification of 'Jones has 10 coins in his pocket')
- 3. ¬JJ (Jones does not get the job)
- 4. SJ (Smith gets the job)
- 5. SC (Smith has 10 coins in his pocket)

Strictly speaking, these assumptions are not sufficient to derive Gettier's conclusion *Smith is justified in believing* '*the man who will get the job has 10 coins in his pocket*.'

In our setting, the sentence 'the man who will get the job has 10 coins in his pocket' can be presented as $(JJ \rightarrow JC) \land (SJ \rightarrow SC)$.

`No justified knowledge assertion for this formula' means ` $t:[(JJ \rightarrow JC) \land (SJ \rightarrow SC)]$, is NOT derivable from the

assumptions x:JJ, y:JC, ¬JJ, SJ, SC.'

It suffices to find a Fitting model where at a certain node all

hold, but

$$t:[(JJ \rightarrow JC) \land (SJ \rightarrow SC)]$$

does not hold for any evidence term t.

Formalizing Gettier Examples, Case I A countermodel in J

W={1,2}, R={(1,2)}, \mathcal{E} is total, i.e., $i \in \mathcal{E}(t,F)$ for each i,t,F.

At 1, all Gettier's assumptions hold, including *x:JJ* and *y:JC* (check this out!), but formulas

 $t:[(JJ \rightarrow JC) \land (SJ \rightarrow SC)]$

are false at **1** for all t's, since $(JJ \rightarrow JC) \land (SJ \rightarrow SC)$ is false at **2** which is accessible from **1**.

Making default assumptions explicit

Apparently, Gettier meant to use additional default assumptions of a non-logical character in his reasoning in Case 1, e.g., that Smith had a justified belief that 'Jones and Smith cannot both have the job,'

 $z:(JJ \rightarrow \neg SJ).$

Adding this assumption makes the reasoning complete. Note that assuming just $JJ \rightarrow \neg SJ$ is not sufficient! This fact should be justified to Smith.

Augmented syntax:

- JJ = Jones gets the job,
- **SJ** = Smith gets the job,
- JC = Jones has 10 coins in his pocket,
- SC = Smith has 10 coins in his pocket,
- **x** = whatever evidence Smith had about JJ,
- y = whatever evidence Smith had about JC,
- $\mathbf{z} = whatever evidence Smith had about JJ \rightarrow \neg SJ.$

Augmented set of non-logical assumptions:

- 1. x:JJ (x is an evidence of 'Jones gets the job')
- y:JC (y is an evidence of 'Jones has 10 coins in his pocket')
- 3. ¬JJ (Jones does not get the job)
- 4. SJ (Smith gets the job)
- 5. SC (Smith has 10 coins in his pocket)
- 6. **z:(JJ→¬SJ)** (**z** is an evidence of 'Jones and Smith cannot both have the job')

Derivation from the augmented set of assumptions 7. (z·x): ¬SJ, from 1,6, by Application

8. $p:(\neg SJ \rightarrow (SJ \rightarrow SC))$, Internalization of a tautology 9. $(z \cdot x):\neg SJ \rightarrow (p \cdot (z \cdot x)):(SJ \rightarrow SC)$, by Application 10. $(p \cdot (z \cdot x)):(SJ \rightarrow SC)$, from 7,9, by Modus Ponens

11. $c:(JC \rightarrow (JJ \rightarrow JC))$, by Axiom Internalization

12. $y:JC \rightarrow (c \cdot y):(JJ \rightarrow JC)$, by Application

13. $(c \cdot y): (JJ \rightarrow JC)$, from 2,12, by Modus Ponens

14. $t:[(JJ \rightarrow JC) \land (SJ \rightarrow SC)]$, for some t, from 10 and 13 (see 'Another example')

Hence, Gettier's conclusion:

Smith's belief that 'the man who will get the job has 10 coins in his pocket' was justified and true.

can be formalized and derived in **J** from the augmented set of Gettier assumptions.

What principles have been used?

The above derivation relies on **classical logic**, as well as **Application** and some **Axiom Internalization**. Steps 8, 11, and 14 use the Axiom Internalization and specify certain constants as atomic justifications of the corresponding logical axioms.

Note that `+ has not been used.

Let us look at the natural J-model for Case I:

'beliefs' 2 • JJ, JC, SC, ¬SJ

'real world' 1 • SJ, SC, JC, ¬JJ

$$\mathcal{E}(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{J}\mathbf{J}) = \mathcal{E}(\mathbf{y}, \mathbf{J}\mathbf{C}) = \mathcal{E}(\mathbf{z}, \mathbf{J}\mathbf{J} \rightarrow \neg \mathbf{S}\mathbf{J}) = \{1, 2\}$$

This J-model is good for partial justifications only; it is **not a factive justification model** (not **AJ**-model), e.g., **1** forces both **x:JJ** and ¬JJ, which contradicts reflexivity.

Formalizing Gettier Examples, Case I Moreover, Case I is apparently inconsistent in AJ. Here is an obvious derivation of a contradiction:

- 1. **x:JJ** (**x** is a justification of 'Jones will get the job')
- 2. x:JJ→JJ (Reflexivity Axiom of AJ)
- 3. JJ (by Modus Ponens)
- 4. ¬JJ (another assumption)

Streamlined Case I: no coins/pockets!

Smith has applied for a job, but has a justified belief that 'Jones will get the job.' Smith therefore (justifiably) concludes ... that 'either Jones or Smith will get the job.'

In fact, Jones does not get the job. Instead, Smith does. So Smith s belief that ' either Jones or Smith will get the job' was justified and true. But it does not appear to be knowledge.

Formalizing Gettier: Summary

Gettier's Examples are formalizable in the most basic system of Justification Logic. Formalization has made visible using non-logical assumptions in Gettier's reasoning in Case I, which were not listed explicitly.

Formal analysis has also demonstrated redundancies in Gettier example I: coins and pockets are irrelevant.

Gettier Examples are inconsistent in logics of factive justifications, the ones that correspond to knowledge.

Whether old methods of modal logic work here as well?

Gettier example can be easily formalized in modal logic **K**, but an appropriate motivation of its relation to justifications goes through the Realization Theorem for **K** which claims that a derivation in **K** generates a justification reasoning.

Hence MORE Justification Logic!

Job-seeking epistemologist example

Smith has a strong piece of evidence (**b**) that he will obtain a Faculty position (proposition **F**) based on the fact that his book on epistemology is universally admired. In addition, Smith has good reason (**v**) to believe that his earlier Silicon Valley experience alone is also quite sufficient to win this job. In fact, the hiring committee could not care less about epistemology and Smith gets the job based on his Silicon Valley experience. So Smith's belief that **F** based on `**b**' is a case of Justified True Belief, but not knowledge.

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Naturally formalized in JL : { $b:F, v:F, v:F \rightarrow F$ }. Any proof of F here requires v, truth tracking by proving!

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Modal logic does not capture the idea: $\{BF, BF, BF \rightarrow F\}$

Other Kinds of Knowledge: Empirical, Perceptual, A Priori, etc.

It remains to be seen to what extent Justification Logic can be useful for analysis of *empirical, perceptual, and a priori* types of knowledge. From the perspective of Justification Logic, such knowledge may be considered as justified by

constants = atomic justifications

Applications (so far)

- A complete axiomatization of mathematical proofs by means of the Logic of Proofs LP (=AJ4). This answers a long-standing question discussed by Kolmogorov and Gödel in 1930s.
- New foundations for Hintikka epistemic modal logic. According to the Correspondence Theorem, 'F is known' can be read as 'there is a sufficient justification of F.'

Non-Kripkian 'existential' semantics for modal logics.

Applications (so far)

- A new approach to the Logical Omniscience Problem; evidence terms show how hard it is to obtain knowledge from initial assumptions.
- A new approach to common knowledge in AI: justified common knowledge provides a more efficient alternative here.
- Applications are anticipated in the areas where epistemic modal logic is used, e.g., Game Theory and Economics, Decision Theory, etc.

Future work

Major foundational problems here are

- structure of realizations,
- *multi-agent justifications,*
- belief revision,
- *justifications in non-monotonic reasoning,*
- Se more applications.